CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Clark Canyon Ranch Stock Water Pipeline
Proposed Implementation Date:	Spring, 2007
Proponent:	Clark Canyon Ranch – c/o Frank Snellman, Manager
Location:	10S 10W Sections 4 & 9
County:	Beaverhead

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Clark Canyon Ranch is proposing to replace approximately ¼ mile of existing stock water pipeline and to construct approximately 1½ miles of new stock water pipeline on the above referenced Trust Land sections. The pipeline would be buried to a depth of 1 – 1½ feet using a cable plow. The pipeline would include 5 stock tanks. Four of the tanks would be located on Trust Land, 2 tanks per section – refer to attached quad and aerial photo.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Vic Hager – Beaverhead County Natural Resource and Conservation Service Office,
Tom Miller – R.E. Miller & Sons Construction Company
Frank Snellman – Clark Canyon Ranch Manager
Bob Brannon – Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Biologist
Patrick Rennie – Montana DNRC Archaeologist

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

1) No action – construction would not be allowed.
2) Allow construction of the stock water pipeline.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

Soils on the site are derived from glacial till and alluvial fans. Beaverhead County does not have a completed soil survey map at the current time. Most upland sites, including this site, have not been surveyed at this time. Slope on site is gentle at approximately 2 - 8%. Due to the gentle slope and high gravel content of the site, no

cumulative impacts such as unacceptable erosion from wind or water are expected. The pipeline would be buried by cable plow with little soil disturbance.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:
Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

The project would not alter water quality or quantity. The project would improve livestock water distribution throughout the state ownership, improving water availability and livestock distribution on adjacent state sections 3, 5, & 8 of T10S R10W.

6. AIR QUALITY:
What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

No effects to air quality would result from this project.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:
What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

Vegetative cover would not be permanently altered by the project. Impacts to vegetation would be limited to a narrow strip along the pipeline route caused by the crawler and cable plow used to place the buried pipeline. If disturbance is more apparent, R.E. Miller Construction would place grass seed along the pipeline route.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:
Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

No impacts are expected as a result of this proposed project being implemented.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:
Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

The Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) – Species of Concern site listed 5 species of concern located in this area.

Ferruginous Hawk (Buteo regalis) is known to nest in the area. Nests are typically located on steep slopes or rock outcrops. Nesting would not be affected by this project.

McCown's Longspur (Calcarius mccownii) is listed by the BLM as a sensitive species and as a Montana species of concern. The information on the MNHP site is not complete and only lists migration occurring in the Bozeman area from April 25 to May 10 and September 10 to October 1, and the reproductive characteristics of the Longspur nests from May 9 through July.

Pygmy rabbits (Brachylagus idahoensis) are listed in the area. Pygmy rabbits require canopies of big sagebrush as a food source, burrow site, and cover. The proposed site for the project contains little to no canopy cover of big sagebrush. The site is dominated by native grass species such as bluebunch wheatgrass, and needle-and-thread grass.

Scallop-leaf lousewort (Pedicularis crenulata) is a species of concern which occurs in riparian areas and would not be affected by this upland project.

Hoary phacelia (Phacelia incana) is a species of concern which occurs on steep stony or talus slopes associated with mountain mahogany and would not be affected by this upland project which would occur in gently sloping alluvial fan-type terrain.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

Patrick Rennie, DNRC Archaeologist, reported an alignment of cairns (24BE855) passing through the NW corner of Section 9, and passing into the SW¼ Section 4 of T10S R10W. The project as proposed affects the E½ of Section 9 and the SE¼ and SE¼SW¼ of Section 4. The project would not alter this historical site.

11. AESTHETICS:
Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The project would not alter aesthetic values of the area.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:
Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No significant demands on environmental resources would occur as a result of this project.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:
List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

No other studies are known to be occurring in the immediate area surrounding the proposed project site.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:
Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

No health or safety risks would be posed by the implementation of the project.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

The proposed project would improve livestock water availability and improve livestock distribution on the on the lease ground

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:
Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

No jobs would be created or eliminated by the proposed project.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:
Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

No additional tax revenue would be created by the proposed project.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:
Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services.

None

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:
List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

State weed management laws and Beaverhead County Weed Management Plan. The lessee is responsible to maintain the lease and control the weeds on the site.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:
Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

The proposed project would not alter recreational activities on the Trust Land sections.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

None.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

None.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

None

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:
Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

The proposed project would not increase the return to the trust. The project would improve livestock water and distribution on the block of state ownership.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Charles Maddox	**Date:**	May 25, 2007
	Title:	Land Use Specialist		

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

After reviewing the EAC, I have selected the Action Alternative, to issue a Land Use License to the Proponent to replace approximately ¼ mile of existing stock water pipeline and to construct approximately 1½ miles of new stock water pipeline and additional stock tanks. I believe this alternative can be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the long-term sustainable natural resource management of the area and generating revenue for the common school trust.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

I conclude all identified potential impacts would be avoided or mitigated by the project size, short duration, timing, design, and by utilizing the mitigations listed below. No significant impacts would occur as a result of implementing the selected alternative.

Mitigations:

1. Excessive areas of disturbance along the pipeline route would be grass seeded with an appropriate weed-free mix.

2. Heavy equipment used for installation of the pipeline would be power washed prior to entering State lands. Proponent would be responsible for weed control along the pipeline route.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

[ ]	EIS	[ ]	More Detailed EA	[X]	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Chuck Barone
	Title:	Dillon Unit Forester
Signature: /s/ Chuck Barone		**Date**: 5/25/07